

**United States Department of the Interior  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
National Human Resources Management Center  
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**EMS TRANSMISSION**

Information Bulletin No. HR-98-080

To: All BC, HR, NI, SNPIT, RS, Helium, and WO Field BIA Liaison Office Employees  
Covered Under CSRS or CSRS Offset Retirement Plans

From: Director, National Human Resources Management Center

Subject: FERS Open Season DD: 12/31/98

Employees covered by the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS), including CSRS Offset, have the opportunity to change from the CSRS to the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) during the special "open season" that has been authorized by the FERS Open Enrollment Act of 1987. The open season will run from July 1, 1998 through December 31, 1998. The effective date of an election to transfer to FERS will be the first day of the pay period following the receipt of the SF-3109, Election of Coverage.

An OPM sponsored satellite broadcast will be held on Wednesday, June 24, 1998, 11:00 am to 12:30 pm, Building 50, in the East/Center/West Conference Rooms. The broadcast will compare and contrast FERS and CSRS benefits, discuss Social Security benefits that some employees might gain by transferring to FERS, cover Thrift Savings Plan issues, and demonstrate the use of the FERS Transfer Model. The broadcast will include representatives from OPM, the Social Security Administration, and the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board. All employees contemplating the transfer to FERS are encouraged to attend. Other broadcasts will be offered and announced at a later date.

To facilitate your making a decision, attached is The FERS Transfer Handbook. This handbook was specifically designed to give the needed information about CSRS and FERS so that an informed decision can be made whether to stay with CSRS or change to FERS. Please take the time to read the Transfer Handbook before making a decision. An electronic version of the Transfer Handbook is also available on the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) web site at [www.opm.gov/fers\\_election](http://www.opm.gov/fers_election).

The OPM election web site enables employees to access all information concerning the FERS Open Season. For those who do not have access to the Internet, a CD-ROM version of the web site will soon be available. The OPM has begun distribution of the CD-ROM version to all servicing personnel offices and all employees will be notified as soon as it is available.

Both the FERS election web site and the CD-ROM version have a computer Transfer Model that can be used to compare benefits under the two systems. This Model takes the individual information entered and, by using either the standard economic assumptions OPM has built into the Model or assumptions that are chosen, projects individual benefits and costs under both systems.

For those employees seriously considering the switch to FERS, it is recommended that you request a Personal Earnings and Benefits Estimate Statement (PEBES) from the Social Security Administration (SSA). A PEBES can be requested on-line at [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov) or by completing Form SSA-7004 which is available through Human Resources or from the local Social Security office. This information is necessary for a more accurate comparison of benefits when using the FERS Transfer Model.

For additional information, please call Patty Elliott at (303) 236-6667.

Signed  
Linda D. Sedbrook  
Director, NHRMC

Authenticated  
Patty Elliott  
Employee Relations Assistant

Attachment

1 - FERS Transfer Handbook (82 pp) (Sent under separate cover)

Distribution

RS-150, Library  
NI-100, Central File  
HR-200